



State of Texas
Department of Transportation
Traffic Operations Division

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
for an
Electronic Grants Management Solution

Issued: September 7, 2004

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Purpose

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Traffic Operations Division, (herein referred to as TxDOT), for the purpose of gathering information from firms concerning electronic grants management solutions. TxDOT desires to move to a Web-based solution designed to:

- manage the entire grant life cycle process and provide a consistent grant application and management process across all grants;
- address the need to maintain several years of grant information, easily accessible to a variety of stakeholders;
- allow controlled access via the Web to external subgrantees and TxDOT staff;
- allow the routing, reviewing and approving of documents through a configurable workflow mechanism; and,
- reduce or eliminate the need for mailing, distribution and storage of mass amounts of hardcopy documents.

1.2. Background

The Traffic Operations Division is currently handling over 250 traffic safety grants annually, representing approximately 40 million dollars per year (Fiscal Year 2004). Both the number of grants and the funds have increased significantly over the last five years.

In the past, grant application and management has been completed manually. While there have been efforts to move to more electronic forms and procedures, there have been financial and personnel limitations to the changeover to a completely electronic grants management system.

Research has been done of other state traffic safety offices in the US and other Texas agencies to determine the existence, status, and relevance of other electronic grants systems that might have some applicability. Current systems that have been identified are mainly only front-end application oriented and do not deal with cost reimbursement.

The Traffic Operations Division has been working with the Governor's Office, the Department of Information Resources (DIR), the Electronic Grants Technical Assistance Work Group (EGTAW), and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to research and coordinate this effort and to comply with established federal and state standards.

The Traffic Operations Division's E-Grants project is in response to (1) the federal move to electronic grants that began in late 2003 and (2) SB 1458, enacted by the 77th session of the Texas Legislature, which directs the Department of Information Resources to study the costs and benefits of establishing an electronic grants management system for Texas state grant programs. With the current technology available, it would create significant efficiencies to reduce the use of paper grants applications and management reports, which are very manpower intensive, time-consuming, and require significant filing capability.

1.3. Objectives

The objectives of this Request for Information include:

- Identification of potential cost-effective, scalable technology solutions that support the grants process of the TxDOT Traffic Safety Section, but could eventually support other types of grant and contract processes within the State of Texas.
- Identification of potential business models for the solution including, but not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Commercial Off-the-Shelf software packages – provided, customized & implemented by vendor
 - (2) Currently available public domain (or government-owned) software - customized & implemented by vendor
 - (3) Custom-built solution – developed & implemented by vendor
 - (4) Service solution – software developed, run and supported by vendor (software housed off-site)
- Identification of flexible cost-effective pricing models for the proposed solutions.
- Submittal of literature, specification sheets, handouts, return on investment (ROI) analysis, and other pertinent information that provides specific information relative to achieving the proposed scope of work outlined in this RFI.

This RFI is issued for the purpose of obtaining information that will be reviewed and evaluated by a team composed of staff from different areas within TxDOT. It is TxDOT's intent to analyze the responses to determine appropriate and suitable technology solutions to meet TxDOT's requirements and to potentially develop specifications for a future request for offer (RFO).

This RFI does not constitute a solicitation of proposals, a commitment to conduct a procurement, or an offer of a contract or prospective contract. TxDOT shall not be liable for any costs incurred by any potential vendor in the preparation and submission of information in response to this RFI.

Following a review of the prospective vendor's information, the evaluation team may schedule a vendor forum and/or contact the prospective vendors to request live demonstrations of the product or solution and/or establish short duration pilot projects, if this is determined to be in the best interests of TxDOT.

2. General Instructions and Response Requirements

2.1. Response Submission Schedule

Event	Deadline
RFI Release	September 7, 2004
Deadline for Submitting Questions	September 20 th , 2004 @ 4:00pm CT (at least 10 business days)
Answers to Questions Released	September 27 th , 2004 @ 4:00pm CT (at least 5 business days)
Response Deadline	October 8 th , 2004 @ 4:00pm CT (at least 10 business days)

Respondents shall submit all questions regarding this RFI by e-mail, addressed to:

egrants@dot.state.tx.us

Questions regarding this solicitation shall be accepted until 4:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on September 20th, 2004. Questions will be answered by September 27th, 2004, no later than 4:00 p.m. CT. Answers will be posted online with the RFI.

Telephone inquiries will not be accepted.

2.2. Response Format

Respondents are invited to provide a written summary, and any additional literature, of how best to address the functionality as described in the **Scope of Services** defined in this RFI. The response should be organized with separate sections as follows:

2.2.1. Title Page

The title page should include:

- (1) The following title & subtitle:

E-Grants Solution Information
Response to the Request for Information from
the State of Texas

- (2) Company name, address, and point-of-contact name

2.2.2. Company Overview

- (1) Company Profile – A statement describing your company, products, services, approaches, etc. including any relevant materials, documents, white papers, Websites, etc.
- (2) Point-of-Contact – Identification of a single point of contact to respond to any questions regarding the response, including name, Email address, phone number and address.

2.2.3. Solution Description

- (1) Solution Overview –An overview of the proposed solution including a description of the business model(s) that would achieve the proposed objectives of this RFI, as described in the [Objectives](#) section of this RFI.
- (2) Solution Details – A more detailed description of how the proposed solution addresses the specifications as defined in the [Scope of Services](#) section of this RFI.

2.2.4. Solution Approach

- (1) Project Management – A statement describing your approach to project management.
- (2) Requirements Gathering – A statement of your approach to discovery and documentation of the existing environment and validation of the business and technical requirements including information on tools that might be used.
- (3) Estimated Timeline - Estimate of implementation timeframe for the development and implementation of the solution.

2.2.5. Solution Infrastructure

- (1) Technical Architecture - A description of the technical architecture used in the proposed solution.
- (2) Hosting – A statement of the hosting options that might be available for this solution.
- (3) Service Levels – Recommended and/or proposed service levels typically associated with this solution and any specific examples of metrics that are commonly tracked to indicate the status and/or performance levels obtained.
- (4) Security – A statement of the approach to securing the solution.
- (5) Support – A statement of the support options that might be available for this solution.
- (6) Scalability – A statement of the scaling capabilities of the proposed solution. (For example, how will the solution accommodate changes in the number of users?)

2.2.6. Attachments

Any relevant materials, documents, white papers, Websites, etc., that help describe the products, approaches, etc. involved in the proposed solution(s).

2.3. Copies of Response

Respondents are invited to submit three (3) copies of their response, as multiple staff will be reviewing the information.

2.4. Delivery Point

Respondents are invited to submit information in accordance with the requirements outlined in this document. Information should be submitted on or before 4:00 p.m. CT on October 8th, 2004 to:

**Texas Department of Transportation
Attn: TRF-TS (E-Grants Project)
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483**

The outside cover of the package or container should feature the following title and identifying information:

E-Grants Solution Information
Response to the Request for Information from
the State of Texas

2.5. RFI Cancellation

TxDOT reserves the right to withdraw this RFI if TxDOT determines that such action is in the best interest of the State of Texas.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following specifications are intended to be guidelines for the organization and communication of the solution, and not meant to limit the response. Respondents should explain how their solution addresses each specified area to the best of their abilities and expand the list as needed to best explain their responses.

3.1. Goals of the Envisioned System:

- Provide a comprehensive Web-based Electronic Grants Management Solution that will enable:
 - (1) a “role-based” security and encryption facility that allows all levels of access to administrators, peer reviewers, and end users while protecting sensitive data from unauthorized access;
 - (2) grant administrators to design and submit grant applications online, including budget information based on performance goals, objectives and activities;
 - (3) external users to submit all required information via the Internet;
 - (4) grant administrators to review and approve grant applications online;
 - (5) external peer reviewers to review and rate competitive grant applications online;
 - (6) external users to submit and receive funding and disbursement transactions; and,
 - (7) the generation of required reports (including performance reports).
- Provide a more efficient and consistent format, making the grant process easier for staff and subgrantees.
- Provide a user-friendly system that will be used by staff, subgrantees and other customers (i.e. state and federal agencies).
- Provide the ability to support multiple subgrantees, multiple program types and multiple grant programs in different divisions of the agency.
- Provide a framework to manage and collect information in a centralized relational database with data accessible through commonly available technology, such as Web browsers.
- Reduce or eliminate the need for mailing, distribution, and storage of mass amounts of hardcopy documents.
- Provide the ability to implement multiple independent templates, business flows, profiles, etc. that leverage a single underlying platform.

3.2. Functional Requirements

Your response should include how your solution meets the following functional requirements that assume a solution that is automated, Web-based and paperless. Please describe your solution for:

- 3.2.1. System Administration
- 3.2.2. Grant Package Development
- 3.2.3. Grant Application and Submission
- 3.2.4. Grant Scoring
- 3.2.5. Grant Approval
- 3.2.6. Performance Reporting
- 3.2.7. Expense Processing and Fund Disbursement
- 3.2.8. Fund Reallocation
- 3.2.9. Oversight, Risk Assessment and Monitoring
- 3.2.10. Reporting
- 3.2.11. Online Documentation Publishing

3.3. Technical Requirements:

Your response should include how your solution meets the following technical requirements:

- 3.3.1. Operational platform
- 3.3.2. Interfaces
- 3.3.3. Database
- 3.3.4. Security
- 3.3.5. Print functionality
- 3.3.6. System performance (availability, reliability, response time)
- 3.3.7. Scalability
- 3.3.8. Modular Elements (ability to be replicated/configured/customized)
- 3.3.9. Documentation (available online)
- 3.3.10. Training
- 3.3.11. Workflow
- 3.3.12. Electronic Signatures
- 3.3.13. Email
- 3.3.14. Online Forms & Document Management